

Radical Middle Way Transcripts

Habib Umar on: ‘Winning Hearts and Minds’

Peterborough, October 2008

Al-hamd lillah and shukr to Allah for enabling us to collect here in this place, this *majlis*, and those who meet on this Earth together, may we meet again in shā’ Allah.

We’re sorry for being late returning from the airport; the plane was delayed. May Allah reward you for your patience. May He take a special look in our hearts at what we hope and think, and may He meet us with what is khayr and what is best. It is said that in an hour that is full of richness, that richness will make you rich, in shā’ Allah. We thank Allah during this special moment for putting us here to work and serve in this Masjid, and this area, in order to spread *nūr*. May Allah help us to do that in shā’ Allah.

From what you have inherited from your parents and forefathers, the special thing you have been given is Islām, and all that which is associated with it. You have been entrusted in spreading it in these areas and doing good work in these areas; may Allah help you and help us to achieve that, in shā’ Allah.

Those before us, among the great ones, spread not only ‘ilm. It was their particular spiritual state – the *anwār* – that spread amongst the people and the communities that they lived in. In the Qur’an Allah describes them by saying ‘*signs are seen in their faces*’. This place of sajda along with the *anwār* of their hearts leads to help us in whatever it is that we do. The pious would say that the one whose gaze did not benefit you, his phrase would not. Rather, seeing them or seeing some of their affects – their gaze, that was connected to the gaze of the Companions, that was connected to the gaze of the Prophet (saw). As they say, the one who does not see the face of one who is felicitous, who is successful, then how would they be felicitous themselves?

In one village, they went out to seek rain. The rains did not come. So they read the prayers to seek rain; they went out a second and third time, but the rains did not come. A man went out and sought the rain. He said to Allah, ‘I ask you by the right, or the station by which that is in this head, that You would give us rain.’ The clouds came from every direction and it rained. People came to him and asked him what he asked of Allah, and he said he asked by the right of what was in his head, meaning eyes that he had, that had seen Abu Yazid Al-Bustami.

When Abdul Qadir Al-Jalani, Allah have mercy upon him, had a vision of the Prophet (saw) and was ordered to call to Allah (swt) in Baghdad, and he said that as he was non-Arab and there were people of the Arabic tongue there, he feared to go. But the Prophet (saw) had ordered him to open his mouth, and he spat into it 7 times. When

he went again to speak, again he stuttered and this time he saw Ali (karam Allahu wajhi), and he ordered him to open his mouth and he spat in it. This time it was 6 times. Abdul Qadir Al-Jalani asked where the 7th was, and he said that the 7th was for adab from Allah's Messenger. So when he began to speak, the light of that gaze began to affect those to whom he was speaking. When the affects of this gaze were seen in his speech, from one of his talks, 7 funeral processions were carried, meaning that the light and feelings of longing, magnification of Allah, were stirred in the hearts of those to whom he spoke, so 7 people were carried out in funeral processions from listening to his lectures. When his son saw that, he intended to speak to people with extremely eloquent speech and tried to have a similar affect. When his father saw this in his heart, he told him to stand and speak. So he stood and he spoke and delivered a very eloquent speech but there was no affect on the people. Abdul Qadir Al-Jalani then spoke and he said that the mother of Ahl Al-Beyt, the people of the Prophet, cooked a chicken, and did so well. Then a cat came and stole it. Then he sat, and from that, everyone cried. People understood that they must be careful that their faith should not be stolen by the devil, or the lower self, or anything that cuts off ones spiritual ascent. The son then saw this affect.

Because of the affect of this gaze it comes in Prophetic tradition that a group of the Muslims will make jihad or will fight, and victory will be delayed. Then they will say, 'Is there amongst you those that saw the messenger of Allah?' so then they will seek victory through them, and of the Companions remaining, they will be given victory by the help of those who have seen the Messenger of Allah. In a generation after them they will similarly wage a campaign and victory will be delayed, and it will be said, 'Is there amongst you those that have seen the Messenger of Allah?'

The affect of this light is such that when they pray, they have increased their light therein, and when they fast, they increase therein, and whenever Ramadan comes they increase in this light and increase in this turning towards Allah (swt). It continues to increase in this way, to the extent that even in the hereafter it continues to increase, and Allah mentioned those who are resurrected with the Prophet (saw) on the day on which Allah will not disgrace the Prophet and those who believe are with him, and they say their light flows as they say, 'Oh Lord, increase in us this light.'

In a hadith of the Prophet (saw) which is read at the end of the night or before fajr, he asked Allah for light before him, to his right, to his left, behind him, above him and below him. He asked Allah to increase him in light. While he was the first light that was created, he still asked to be increased in light.

No believer or Muslim can have of this light, save those with faith. So if they believe, even if they are a sinner, it is said in tradition that were the light of a sinning believer revealed or unveiled, it would fill that which is between the sky and the Earth. And in this blessed moment, we ask Allah to prepare our light in our hearts, to grant us a gift, from this splendid light, from which the affects of acceptance during Ramadan will be manifest. So our limbs are enlivened in acts of obedience, and an avidness to perform them. So that we're careful about the right of Allah and the right of His love and the love of His Messenger, with respect to our eyes so that we do not stretch our gaze to that which displeases Allah. The same with respect to our ears – that we do not listen to that which Allah has forbidden. In our tongues, save that we do not speak but that which pleases Allah. Because we want these eyes to see the face of

Allah's Messenger, the people of his house and the noble Companions, and to be prepared to see the noble countenance of Allah. However, every eye that does not see the face of the Prophet Muhammad (saw) will not see Paradise and nor will it see Allah's countenance and noble face, subhānahu. The Prophet says that Adam and those who came after him are *'beneath my banner on the day of rising'*, so therein prepare for entering Jannah with the gaze of Allah's Messenger', (saw). He is the one who said to the mother of the believers, 'A'isha, *'Woe to the one who does not see me on yowm Al-Qiyāma'*. She asked, *'Who does not see you?'* He said, *'The one who does not send blessings or salāt to those that I have mentioned.'* Seeking this from Allah, *jalla jalalu*, we must renew our repentance for Him and turn to Him for repentance. And I resolve to fulfil his covenant, and we show care to His right with regard to rearing our families or teaching them in their knowledge and their character and their adab. And that we be his representative with everyone we meet, and this is fulfilling His covenant and following His noble guidance.

We seek refuge in Allah the Magnificent and return to Him in repentance
We seek refuge in Allah the Magnificent and return to Him in repentance
We seek refuge in Allah the Magnificent and return to Him in repentance
Oh Allah, accept this repentance, and give it to be pure repentance
Purify us thereby, in our hearts, our bodies and our spirits
Make us of those who are oft of repentance
Make us of those who are purified
Your pious slaves, oh our Master, oh our Lord
That the heart of Your Prophet is given happiness by the works of his Ummah, that are shown to him
So we ask You on this night, that You make his heart overjoyed with us, happy with Your Grace over us; happy about our sincere intention to follow Him outwardly and inwardly
So we spend this night while You are pleased with us, and that Your Messenger is pleased with us.
Grant us to see his face in this world and at the time of death; in the intermediate realm of the Barzakh and the Day of Rising, and in Paradise, the abode of generosity
With Your Mercy, oh Merciful of the merciful, increase this Masjid in light upon light
And goodness from His Goodness, and a secret from His Secret
Make those who uphold it, frequently come to it, plunging into the ocean of that light
Adorn us and them with a garment of His love, which we ascend to the higher stations
Oh Generous, these are the hands of the poor who have stretched them to You, and You are the Wealthy, the Merciful
Accept us in this moment of ours
An acceptance through which there is no door of mercy, save that you open it for us
Oh Opener, oh All-Knowing
Oh Most Merciful of the merciful
The First of the first
The Last of the last
Oh You of Firm Power
Oh Merciful towards the needy
Oh Most Merciful of the Merciful
It has reached us from Your Prophet that no group congregates and some of them pray and the others say Amīn, save that you answer their prayers
Oh Allah, accept all of us

Oh gaze to all of us
Amīn
Oh Allah give us our tawfīq
Oh Allah make it a moment in which you bring us near
And that we receive the super abundance of Your Grace and Mercy
Do not leave any heart save that You rectify it with Your gaze to it
You know best our needs and their needs in this world and the next
So fulfil them in the best way, those that we know and those that know not
By Your Mercy oh Most Merciful of the merciful
Oh Allah we ask You through this Prophet
That You liberate each of us with the reality of *lā ilaha illā lā*
And that You make his final speech at the time of death *lā ilaha illā lā*
And that You raise on the Day of Rising the group of *lā ilaha illā lā*
And that You make us of the elect that spread *lā ilaha illā lā*
And those that call to *lā ilaha illā lā*
In the best, most pleasing ways to You
Oh Allah we renew our covenant between us and You
And we say, all of us together,
lā ilaha illā lā [Habib Umar and audience recite together]
lā ilaha illā lā
lā ilaha illā lā
lā ilaha illā lā
Muhammad rasūl Allah
Sall Allahu ‘alayhi
‘ala ahlihi
Wa ‘ala sahabihi
Wa sallam
Oh Allah give us the goodness of this world
Protect us from the fire
Make us of the Pure
Make it a moment of acceptance
Of that which is pleasing to the Prophet
Of that which has benefit and acceptance
As You have gathered us here, gather us on the Day of Judgement
Oh Lord of lords
Praise be to Allah
Answer us
Guide us
Make us steadfast in that which You love

May Allah accept this from us, by the sacred Al-Fatiha and the presence of the Prophet (saw)

[Audience quietly recite Al-Fatiha]

About Habib Umar

Habib Umar bin Hafiz is a descendant of the Prophet, peace and blessings be upon him, through his grandson Imam Hussain, may Allah be pleased with him. He was born in Tarim, Hadramaut in Yemen, and raised in a household that possessed a tradition and lineage of Islamic scholarship and righteousness, his father being the famous martyr, scholar, and caller to Islam Al-Habib Muhammad bin Salim.

Having memorized the Qur'an at a very early age, Habib Umar also memorized the core texts in fiqh, hadith, Arabic Language, and other religious sciences. He studied many sciences including spirituality from his father Al-Habib Muhammad bin Salim, acquiring from him a deep love and concern for da'wah and religious counsels in the way of Allah. He attended numerous circles of knowledge held by many traditional scholars, such as Muhammad bin Alawi bin Shihab and al-Shaikh Fadl Baa Fadl. Later, he enrolled at the Ribat of al-Bayda', where he began to study the traditional sciences under the expert tutelage of Al-Habib Muhammad bin Abd-Allah al-Haddar, as well as under the Shafi'i jurist and scholar Al-Habib Zain bin Sumait. Habib Umar was given permission to teach soon after.

Afterwards, he began to visit many neighboring towns and communities across Yemen and studied with the mufti of Ta'iz, al-Habib Ibrahim bin Aqil bin Yahya, who began to show him much love and attention. He received similar treatment from his Shaikh al-Habib Muhammad al-Haddar, who gave him his daughter's hand in marriage after being impressed by his uprightness and intelligence. Al-Habib Umar then traveled to the Hijaz and studied several books with prominent scholars, including Al-Habib Abdul Qadir bin Ahmad al-Saqqaf, Al-Habib Ahmed Mashur al-Haddad, and Al-Habib Attas al-Habashi.

Wherever Habib Umar has gone, no stone has been left unturned in his attempt to revive the love of Allah and His Messenger, peace and blessing be upon him, in the hearts of people. After returning to Tarim, he established Dar al-Mustafa, an educational institute to which students from across the world have come to study. Habib Umar currently lives in Tarim, where he oversees the development of Dar al-Mustafa and the many schools that have been set up under his management.

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